

what he means by that, so we can discuss what he means is factual and not factual.

Mr. THOMAS. If the Senator will yield back my time, I will be happy to, because I intend to do that. We are talking here that it is being done to save taxes. That is not true. That is just not true. If there was no budget crisis at all, if there were no tax reductions being talked about, you have to do something with part A of Medicare. Kevin Phillips and others seem to ignore that.

The fact is, the money that goes into part A of Medicare is taken from your salary and mine, 2.9 percent, and goes into this fund. And this fund, according to the trustees, three out of six of whom are Cabinet members, they say that by the year 2002 that fund will be paying out more than it is taking in. That is a fact.

The fact is, even if you did not have anything to do with the budget, you would have to do something if you want to continue to have Medicare based on that premise of paying for part A from what is withheld from salary and from the employer. That is a fact.

So, that is where we are. The people who oppose change do not talk about that. They get into this tax thing, which really, really has nothing to do with it. And, on the contrary, the opposite is they do not have any suggestions. They simply want to complain about the idea that people are saying we need to make some changes there. And our friends stand up and say "Oh, yes, we need to make changes," and then resist every change that is made.

So, I think we need to start talking a little more about the facts and get a little off this idea of a marketing rhetoric that is designed, simply, to oppose what it is we are doing. We have a basic difference in philosophy. I understand that. That is perfectly legitimate. That is what elections are about. That is what two parties are about.

I happen to think we are better with less government and less taxes, and trying to find a way to reduce the costs of Medicare, not to simply find more money to put in it.

Do you want to talk about fraud? The Senator mentioned fraud. Most experts indicate that there is \$30 billion of fraud in Medicare now. So I feel very strongly that, if we are going to have public policy that is good public policy for all of us, public policy needs to be made based on some facts and not simply some kind of marketing technique.

The other is change. Mr. President, we have a great opportunity now to make change. We have an opportunity in the next several weeks to finish the job the American voters asked us to start last November, to finish the job we said we would do: To have a less intrusive Government, to have a Government that costs less, to have a Government where the programs that are in place have been evaluated in terms of their effectiveness, whether or not the

expenditure of taxpayers' money is getting to the people it is designed to assist. For a program such as welfare, the job is evaluating whether it is indeed accomplishing what it set about to do, and that is to help people who need help and then to help those people into a position to help themselves. Is that happening? The answer is no.

So, if you would like to have different results, I think it is imperative that you change. It is pretty hopeless to look for something to happen, to continue to do the same thing and expect different results. Mr. President, that does not happen.

We have a great opportunity in the next several weeks to talk about fundamental change for the first time in 40 years; for the first time in 25 years, to balance the budget. Who would argue with the idea that we need to balance the budget, that it is not morally and fiscally responsible to balance the budget? We hear that—yes, yes, that is a good thing to do. But, when we seek to do it, all we hear is resistance to it.

We are going to do that. We are going to save Medicare, and Medicare has to be changed to be saved. We are going to reform welfare. These are the things we are setting about, necessarily, to do.

It is tough when you talk about change. It is hard to change the direction of Government. It is increasingly difficult as the Government is in more and more programs, that more and more people are involved in lobbying for those programs, that more and more people are involved in the bureaucracy that supports those programs. So it is difficult to make change.

Change is what President Clinton talked about almost 3 years ago when he was elected. Has he brought about change? The biggest change was the largest tax increase we have had in the history of this country. But I think change was the basis for the 1994 elections. I think change is something that almost everybody embraces, but it is difficult to do, and I do understand that. But if we are to have different results, we have to change the way we do things.

Mr. President, we have worked now for a number of months. We are down to the critical decision time, when all this work now will result in a decision and we will decide whether we are going to balance the budget. We will decide what kind of country we want to transfer to our kids and their kids, as we go into another century.

What happens if we do not? In a few weeks we will be talking about voting on a debt extension to \$5 trillion. In just a year or two, unless we change, we will find that all the available tax revenues will be used for entitlements and interest on the debt. If we do not change, we will not have a Medicare Program by the year 2002.

So, change is not an option, in my view. Change is exactly what has to be done, and, of course, there are different

views of how you do it. But the idea that you use a marketing rhetoric designed to scare people and say change will devastate the programs that the country is committed to carrying out just is not the case.

I think we need to continue to say, here are the good things that happen when we balance the budget and ultimately reduce the amount of money we take out of families to pay for Government. We can reduce the growing inflation. We can create more jobs by putting more dollars into the private sector. And we can be more effective in what we do.

So we are talking about change. We are talking about public policy based on facts. We disagree, then, as to the remedy. But we ought to start, at least, by recognizing these facts that are there, that are described not by the Members of Congress but by the trustees of Medicare.

Mr. President, our time is to be shared among several of our freshman colleagues, so I would like now to yield to my colleague and friend from Georgia. And he then will be followed by another. I yield to the Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

#### HISTORIC DECISIONMAKING

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, as my good colleague from Wyoming has noted, the contemporary custodians of this great democracy are coming upon a decision in the next several weeks that will be historic. For the first time, we will be considering major questions with regard to how we are going to govern ourselves. We will be taking under advisement major changes. We will be talking about balancing the budget for the first time in 32 years. We will be talking about dramatically changing the welfare system that has been developed over the last 30 or 40 years. We will have before us a proposal to protect Medicare, and we will be talking about lowering the economic burden on every working family and business by lowering taxes.

Obviously, when you are talking about changes of this magnitude, which I believe the vast majority of Americans believe should occur, they want taxes lowered. They are tired of a welfare program that does not work. They cannot believe we do not balance our budgets, and they are worried about a Medicare Program that is collapsing.

In the midst of this, of course, you will have very adversarial debate, contentious debate. Essentially, the debate is centered between two very different ideas about governing America. On the one hand, mostly on the other side of the aisle, we have defenders of Washington as it is, that we should not balance our budgets, it is too difficult to balance our budgets; we do not need